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THE GULL

MONTHLY BULLETIN

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WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION IN SOUTH PACIFIC

"Wildlife and Conservation in Australia, New Guinea, New Zealand and New Caledonia" will be diseussed by Peter Alden at the Golden Gate Audubon meeting in San Franciseo on **Thursday, April 10.** The talk will be illustrated by color slides taken by Mr. Alden and Robin Smith and will show man's use and misuse of his environment and wildlife in the vast "Down Under." Mr. Alden will stress the plight of the Emu, Koala, Kangaroo, and Birds of Paradise, and will discuss the diseovery of four pairs of Kagu in New Caledonia. Peter Alden is the author of a new book, *Finding the Birds in Western Mexico: a Guide to the States of Sonora, Sinaloa and Nayarit,* illustrated by John O'Neill and published by the University of Arizona Press, Tueson.

The meeting will begin at **7:30 p.m.** in the Hall of Flowers on Ninth Avenue at Lineoln—a well lighted intersection at the edge of Golden Gate Park. Visitors are weleome.—MRS. PHYLLIS ZWEIGART, *Program Chairman.*

APRIL-MAY FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, April 12, Audubon Canyon Ranch, Marin County. Ranch Naturalist C. W. Zumwalt will guide the group to the overlook whieh offers excellent views of the Great Blue Herons fledging their young and the Common Egrets turning their eggs. Those who wish to stay after luneh might want to explore the new Martin Griffin Trail and/or visit Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory north of the town of Bolinas. Meet promptly at **8:15 a.m.** in the rear parking lot of Elwood's Restaurant at the northern end of the town of Stinson Beaeh. Allow enough time if you plan to have breakfast in the restaurant.

Sunday, April 27, Our annual HARDY SEAFARERS trip on the "Blue Horizon" and the "Paul G" to observe nesting and migrating sea birds while *circling* the Farallon Islands. This very popular trip has been featured in *Time* magazine, *San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle,* and the *New York Times.* Point Reyes Bird Observatory is conducting extensive research on the Southeast Farallon Island. It is hoped that this island will be ineluded in the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge cirele. All those on board will be asked to participate in making bird observations. **The**

boats will leave Sausalito at 7 a.m. Daylight Saving Time and return approximately at 4 p.m. Fare: $10 per person. Make checks payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society and *please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.* Mail it to Mrs. Valeria G. DaCosta, 2090 Pacific Ave., San Francisco 94109. Details will be sent with acknowledgment. Reservations will close **April 15** *or earlier* if boats are filled.

Saturday, May 3, McCoy Ranch, Arroyo Mocho, in the Livermore Valley. Bullock's Orioles, Phainopeplas, Western Kingbirds, Yellow-billed Magpies and Lewis' Woodpeckers can be seen. Meet in Livermore one block beyond the tall flagpole on Livermore Ave. at **8 a.m.** Allow one hour's driving time from Oakland. Leader, Miss Erline Hevel, 661-4251.

Sunday, May 4, above trip will be repeated. Leader, Miss Aileen Pierson, 587-4163. (Mrs. McCoy sent the Field Trips Chairman a letter saying she will be glad to have the Audubon Society visit the ranch and she would miss the Society if it did not visit the ranch every year.)

Saturday, May 17, Samuel P. Taylor State Park, Marin County, to study bird songs. Details will be announced in May *Gull.*

Friday-Sunday, May 30-June 1, Yosemite National Park. For members and guests we have reserved a small number of cabin units for the nights of May 29, 30, and 31. See reservation information below. In order to help defray the leaders' expenses there will be a $1 charge for all adults attending this trip. Please include this item in your check when making cabin reservations through Golden Gate Audubon. Others will pay at start of trip on Saturday morning. Friday will be free to explore this beautiful park on your own. We hope to be able to see Warren Larson's Great Gray Owl movies on Friday evening. (More information will be in May *Gull.*) Saturday's field trip will begin promptly at **8 a.m.** from the main post office in the Government Center. Leaders: Ted Chandik, Dr. A. Laurence Curl, A. Warren Larson.

Please copy the following form for your reservations:

Camp Curry accommodations wanted: *All accommodations for* 3 *nights*—Cabin Room, with bath, single, $11.55 a night. Cabin Room, with bath, double, $7.35 per person a night. Cabin without bath, single, $5.50 a night. Cabin without bath, double, $3.42 per person a night.

All the above rates include tax. Total Enclosed $.....

Please send names and addresses of both parties when making a double reservation. Cancellations may be made up to **April 30.** On a double reservation a cancellation must be for a cabin room or cabin—not just for one person unless you provide a substitute and a check so that the original check can be returned, or an additional check to cover the cost of a single reservation. Make checks payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society and mail **before April 30** with a *stamped, self-addressed envelope* to Mrs. Valeria G. DaCosta, 2090 Pacific Ave., San Francisco 94109.

—MRS. VALERIA G. DaCOSTA, *Field Trips Chairman*

A Stagnaro Sport Fishing Boat will leave the Santa Cruz municipal wharf at **7:30 a.m. June 16** on the annual albatross expedition of the Santa

Cruz Bird Club. Fare: $1.50 for members, $2 for others. For reservations write Leavitt McQuesten, 120 Otis St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

AUDUBON NATURE WORKSHOPS FOR YOUTH GROUP LEADERS

Audubon Nature Training is offering a new series of workshops starting April 10 and May 1 for youth group leaders accompanied by their groups. Attendance is limited to leaders who have attended an Audubon Nature Training course.

There will be three series: a Vacant Lot Series, an Animal Series (including birds and insects), and a Weather Series. Content will include developing and use of a nature trail, making of color wheels, animal casts, insect models, weather stations, etc.

Fourteen groups have already signed up, and more instructors are needed. If you have taken Audubon Nature Training, wouldn't you like to participate in the workshop program? If so, call Valborg Thomas (524-9275) or Audubon Nature Training (549-1038).—BERTHA UNDERHILL

The Audubon Nature Training Program received a gift from Frances S. Gabbert *in memory of* Lillian Bridget Gollands. Gifts were also received from Barbara Harrison and Carol Mullen.

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARKS' NATURALIST PROGRAM

This spring the East Bay Regional Park District will offer a variety of nature programs for both adults and children:

Saturdays, now until May 3, Coffee Hikes from **9 to 11 a.m.** in Tilden Nature Area. A "Discover Nature" hike will begin on the lawn next to the Little Farm. Ecology and conservation will be emphasized during these two-hour hikes. Children under 5 should not attend unless they are experienced hikers or the adults have a "tiny tot back-pack".

Saturdays, 9 to 11 a.m., May 10 to June 7—"A Walk Along San Francisco Bay" at Alameda Beach Regional Park. Meet on the lawn by the flagpole.

One Saturday each month from April through June, Sunol Regional Park will offer stargazing sessions in Las Encinas Meadow. Starting at dusk amateur astronomers and interested individuals and families are invited to gather around the telescope to view the moon and stars and hear a short talk on the celestial objects. Dates will be announced in newspapers. Call 862-2244 for information.

Sundays, 12-2 p.m., April 6-27, Family Lunch Hikes in Kennedy Grove Regional Park. Bring a sack lunch and meet the naturalist at the main parking lot.

Sundays, 12:30-2:30 p.m., May 4-June 8, Family Lunch Hikes in Tilden Regional Park. Bring a sack lunch and meet the naturalist on the lawn by the Little Farm.

Sundays, 3:30-5 p.m., now to June 8, Family Fun Hikes in Tilden Nature Area. Meet by the Little Farm. The naturalist will discuss wildflowers, hummingbirds, reptiles and other subjects observed on the trail.

Sundays, 2:30-3:30 p.m., now to June 8, Ecology Talk on "Ways of Nature" in Sunol Valley Regional Park. Meet at the Old Green Barn. Following the Ecology Talk there will be a Spring Discovery Hike from **3:30 to 4:30.** To reach this park, drive south on Highway 680, take the Calaveras Road turnoff just *past* the exit for the town of Sunol. Proceed south on Calaveras Road about 3 miles to the park directional signs.

Sundays, 11-1:30 p.m., May 4-25, "Discover Nature Walks" in Coyote Hills Regional Park. Each Sunday program will emphasize one of the following themes: Marshland Hideaway, Indian Mound History, Ecology of Coyote Hills and Salt Ponds, and Research at the Bio-Sonar Laboratory. Bring a lunch and the whole family. Meet the naturalist at the main parking lot. To reach Coyote Hills take the Jarvis Ave. turnoff from Highway 17, turn right on Newark Blvd., drive north about 1½ miles until you see the Patterson Ranch Road sign and the park sign.

In addition to the above programs the Regional Park District will offer *Outdoor Workshops* for adults and high school students on **Saturdays from 1 to 4,** as follows:

"Our Feathered Friends", **April 5-May 3,** in Tilden Nature Area with enrollment before April 2. "Marine Life of the San Francisco Bay", **May 10-June 7,** at Alameda Beach Regional Park with enrollment before May 6. Enrollment will be limited to 35 persons per class. A $3 registration fee, payable at the first meeting, will be required to cover costs of printed materials for each class. For registration call 524-1034 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. or 533-9122 between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. For further information about the East Bay Regional Parks call 531-9300.

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Almost half of the $60,000 down-payment which Audubon Canyon Ranch made last December on the new 234-acre South Canyon came from a number of interest-free loans. The Ranch Board of Directors would like to make another large payment on the note as soon as possible in order to reduce interest charges (7% on the balance of $150,000). Friends willing to make such a loan to Canyon Ranch should call the treasurer, Stan Picher, at 435-0766 or write to P.O. Box 2113, San Francisco 94126.

Gifts of remembrance were made to Audubon Canyon Ranch.

In Memory of:	*Gift of:*
Lloyd Perry Montgomery	Richard E. Morris
Eleanor White Baker and Antoinette White	Elizabeth McClave

DR. ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary & Memorial Fund Chairman.*

BANDING CLINICS AT PRBO

Point Reyes Bird Observatory will offer bird banding clinics on **April 5, 12, and 19 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** These sessions will concentrate on general netting and banding techniques in the vicinity of the Observatory and will be conducted by Dr. L. R. Mewaldt, John Ralph, Robert Stewart, and other instructors. Banding birds and the associated record-keeping is the heart of Observatory activity and it has been accomplished largely

by volunteer help. No previous knowledge of bird identification or banding is necessary. This is an opportunity to learn more about birds while contributing to our knowledge. You will also help supply information to aid and support general conservation efforts. If you are interested in participating, please write to Banding Training Program, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Mesa Road, Bolinas, CA 94924.

S.O.S. FOR BCDC

"Melvin Lane, Chairman of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, warns that the Government Efficiency Committee, headed by Sen. Richard Dolwig of San Mateo is the greatest obstacle to passage of the proposed BCDC Plan to control Bay fill. In view of the pressure upon the legislators of powerful Bay-fill proponents such as Westbay Community Associates, Leslie Salt, the City of San Mateo, the bill may be so amended as to nullify its purpose unless the legislators can be convinced there is a public demand for a bill with effectively strong controls." *The Sequoia,* March (Sequoia Audubon Society).

THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY has testified in favor of pending federal legislation that would provide far stiffer penalties for oil spills and provide incentives for stricter precautions on the part of the oil industry.

WANTED—VOLUNTEERS FOR CONSERVATION. *People for Open Space* in the Bay Area needs help for its expanding activities to gain wide popular support of citizens and public officials in preserving our environment. Now is a critical time. Persons with experience in publicity, public relations, office supervision or bookkeeping can make a fine contribution and find it very rewarding. Write to People for Open Space, 126 Post St., Room 607, San Francisco 94108, or phone 673-1005 or 781-8729 mornings.—MRS. MARY HUTCHINSON.

SUMMER CAMPS IN WYOMING AND ALASKA

The Audubon Camp of the West, in the Wind River Range of Western Wyoming, will again offer four two-week sessions of adult education from **June 29 to August 22.** The camp is located only 60 miles from the Grand Teton National Park. The fee of $150 includes board and lodging, instructions, and all field trip transportation. Enrollment for each session is limited to 50 registrants. For further information and applications, write to Director, Audubon Camp of the West, P.O. Box 4446, Sacramento, CA 95825.

From **June 20 through June 30** Camp Denali in Alaska offers a special session designed to acquaint visitors with the flora and fauna of the sub-Arctic tundra. The camp is at the Kantishna gateway to Mt. McKinley National Park. Each day field trips take the group into a different habitat to see ptarmigan, long-tailed jaeger, Arctic terns, loons, golden plovers, caribou, moose, grizzly bear, and Dall mountain sheep. For information and reservations write to Camp Denali, Box D, College, Alaska 99701. Ginny Hill Wood is co-owner and Director.

FIELD TRIP REPORT AND OBSERVATIONS

McClure's Beach and Tomales State Park, Marin County—Fourteen Audubonites, including three eastern visitors, did not believe the weatherman and ventured out on the stormy morning of February 15. During the first hour, bird watching was enjoyed comfortably inside Mrs. Gustavus Miller's home in Inverness. Mrs. Miller's gracious invitation enabled us to study birds close in at her feeders. By mid-morning we arrived at McClure's Beach with not a cloud in the sky. Due to a very high surf we were not able to walk the rocky beach to look for Harlequin Ducks as we had hoped, but we did see a Black-legged Kittiwake. We were accompanied at lunch time in Tomales State Park with many land birds. One of the eastern visitors, Bob Grant, pointed out a Goshawk as we approached the park.

February Observations—On Feb. 6 a Bohemian Waxwing was found at Folsom and Beale Sts. in San Francisco by Bob Southerland of New York City. The bird was still there on Feb. 8. On Feb. 16 a **fifth Yellow-billed Loon** was in Monterey. Ross' Geese were at Merced Wildlife Refuge and Mountain Plovers on Sandymush Road leaving the refuge. While visiting the Merced Refuge on the 16th I learned from Robert Coffman, Manager, that thoughtless birders had ventured into the hunting area during hunting season, and as a result he was forced to close the entire refuge to birders at that time. This explains why other birders were disappointed when they were not allowed to enter. On Feb. 18 there were 9 Barrow's Goldeneyes on Lake Merritt, Oakland. On Feb. 21 a 2nd-year Glaucous Gull was in the Palace of Fine Arts pond, S.F. Mrs. Lewis K. Laud of Sea Cliff, S.F., reported two Townsend's Solitaires near the golf course on Feb. 20. Hundreds of Black-legged Kittiwakes were in the Monterey area during February, according to Alan Baldridge.

—MRS. VALERIA G. DaCOSTA

Larry Curl and Bill Pursell reported a Ferruginous Hawk a few miles south of Fairfield on Feb. 20.

OAKLAND'S BIRD BONANZA

The storms sweeping Northern California brought a bird bonanza to Oakland. Our famous Palo Seco Robin Roost has now come up with one of the highest land-bird populations recorded in California, based on an estimate of these winter-migrant robins flying in over Skyline Blvd. from Contra Costa County on Jan. 1 and Jan. 17. Over 450,000 robins were estimated from a vantage station between Ascot and Skyline overlooking Redwood Regional Park, based on calculations of 300 birds per second passing overhead on a half-mile front between 5 p.m. and 5:15 p.m., plus lighter waves of birds for some 20 minutes before 5 o'clock.

All these robins were headed toward the Palo Seco Canyon night roosting area, although a team of counters working on the Browning Monument hilltop behind Woodminster Theatre clocked off only some 6,000

coming in from lower Eastbay points. Highest robin estimate made at this lower station in any recent year was 37,000 birds on December 28, 1957. The mass movements of robins from Contra Costa County into the roost were not officially noted until reported by Skyline residents Mr. and Mrs. Harry Overmire in 1968.

Band-tailed Pigeons have also appeared in the Oakland hills in numbers unprecedented in recent years, with 1200 reported during the Audubon Christmas Census taken this year on January 1. Several hundreds of these wild pigeons have been settling to night roosts on cypress and pine trees directly across the canyon from the robins, which prefer the dense growth of California laurels.

A totally unexpected and significant event was observed on January 31 and February 1, when thousands of starlings suddenly appeared before sundown over Palo Seco Canyon and, after thrilling aerial gyrations, settled to roost even before all the robins arrived. At daybreak on February 2 the robins burst forth as usual from the canyon but the starlings could not be found! It is hoped the starlings are merely transients and not new Eastbay residents in such numbers, though some do reside locally.

—PAUL F. COVEL, *Oakland Park Naturalist.*

"TOP TEN" CHRISTMAS COUNTS

San Diego's record-smashing 217 species in the Christmas bird count is now official. That compares with 203 for the runner-up, Cocoa, Fla., putting San Diego ahead for the second year, in what has become a traditional rivalry. The rest of the top ten: Tomales Bay, Calif.—188, Freeport, Texas—179, Coot Bay, Fla.—170, Monterey Penin., Calif.—168, Crystal Springs, Calif.—165, Santa Barbara, Calif.—165, Drake's Bay, Calif.—164, West Palm Beach, Fla.—164.—*Audubon Leader's Conservation Guide.*

BOOK NOTES—In his new book, *Between the Devil & the Deep Blue Bay,* Harold Gilliam describes the ruthless destruction of San Francisco Bay as "medieval behavior". This timely book is illustrated with photographs by Michael Bry, Rondal Partridge, Richard Conrat, Lynn Vardeman. (Chronicle Books, $4.95).

Good Birding Trips by Katrina Ladwig and Pat Sullivan is a booklet published by the Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club, Houston, to acquaint birders with good spots in the Upper Gulf Coast area. It sells for $2 and may be ordered from Katrina Ladwig, 3303 Sunset Blvd., Houston, Texas 77005 after May 1.

Birger's Birds by Birger Roos is a unique cartoon book inspired by authentic bird names and the visual images they evoke. (Golden Press, $1.50). We could add a few of our own.

Several Golden Gate Audubon members (Paul Covel, Warren Larson, Charles Huppe, Vi Homem) are photographing nature subjects for educational programs and they would appreciate help in finding photogenic subjects. Please phone Warren Larson or the Editor.

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Canyon Ranch Film Crmn.	Mrs. Bonnie Smith	555 Dewey Blvd., San Francisco 94116	681-7635

Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward THE GULL. Monthly meetings second Thursday 7:30 p.m. Joint membership, Local & National $10 per year, includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and THE GULL. Subscription to THE GULL separately $2 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.